

Now is the time to end any TV blackout restrictions for televised sports. At the time the current rules were created all we had was “free” over-the-air TV and the telecasts were advertiser supported. Presently, consumers are paying large sums of money each month to cable and satellite providers and are forced to pay for channels we often do not even want.

The regional and national sports networks are now paying millions and millions of dollars in rights fees for these telecasts, while these costs are passed along to consumers whether they are sports fans or not. It’s not like the cable or satellite providers reimburse us or credit us for “missed time” when they black out hours of their programming due to a local sports event.

Since we are forced to pay for these channels, we should be able to receive all programming they provide, regardless of its location. In addition, there are instances where a sports event televised locally is also on a national telecast. There is no reason for the local telecast to have the ability to deny viewers of the choice of which telecast to watch.

As I understand it, the ESPN channels are the highest priced of any cable or satellite networks. Consumers are entitled to 24 hours a day of their programming for our money, as well as from any other sports network or station, local or national.